

February 18, 2010

Dear Senator Harp and Representative Geragosian:

As a member of the Birth To Three Interagency Coordinating Council and Provider of Birth To Three Services in Northwest Connecticut, I would like to thank-you for your support of the Birth To Three system over the past years. I again ask you to support infants and toddlers with special needs by supporting the recommended appropriation for this program in the Governor's proposed budget.

Birth To Three is a program that exemplifies results -based accountability. It is a program in which money invested early in the care of children with special needs results in significant financial and social benefits when they are school age. Sixty- five percent of children who were enrolled in Birth To Three do not need special education by kindergarten. Each year, approximately 1100 children who received Birth To Three services do not need special education. Using the per pupil cost of \$20,250.00, that is a savings of \$ 22,275,000 per year for each grade level. Furthermore, since Birth To Three utilizes a parent- training model, we have parents that are more competent and involved in the care and education of their children.

The Connecticut Birth To Three system relies on insurance reimbursement for a portion of their revenue. Each program is responsible for billing insurance and appealing denials to maximize insurance payments. Insurance appeals are usually a very time consuming task for the billing staff as well as the service providers who need to provide further documentation. Although, many times the extra efforts do result in increased reimbursement. The 10% of insurance reimbursement programs are allowed to keep offsets these costs. The Governor's proposed budget eliminates the 10% retained by the programs and this may actually result in less insurance reimbursement since programs will not be able to maintain their current billing staff to appeal the claims. We would like to suggest that the Department of Developmental Disabilities explore other means of insurance billing such as centralized billing by a single contractor. This strategy will hopefully maximize insurance revenue while not putting a burden on Birth To Three Programs.

I can be reached at (203 ) 271-3288 to discuss these issues if needed. Thank-you.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Jackson  
Director , Children's Therapy Services L.L.C.  
Chair, Quality Committee of Interagency Coordinating Council